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The True Source of Missionary Zeal

By Rev. ALEX. MACLAREN, D.D.

AND

The Main Instrumental Force of Missionary Work

By Rev. E. K. ALDEN, D.D.

Etc.

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Printed by R. & R. Clark, *Edinburgh.*

PREFATORY NOTE

THE address of the Rev. Dr. MacLaren and the paper of the Rev. Dr. Alden, reprinted in the following pages, are issued in the present form because of the conviction that their wide circulation is, in the interests of Missions, much to be desired.

They need no word of commendation; they speak for themselves. Seldom in the same compass have the essential conditions of true Missionary zeal and of successful Missionary effort been set forth with equal clearness and power.

If the force of the four-fold considerations urged by Dr. MacLaren were but adequately realised by the supporters of the various Missionary Societies of the United Kingdom and America, the number of Missionaries in connection with these societies might be doubled without delay. And if, as urged in Dr. Alden's paper, the duty and privilege and power of prayer in relation to Missions were but duly recognised and exercised, what tidings of thanksgiving and praise would come from every Mission Station in the world!

If after reading, in the spirit of self-application, the soul-stirring words of this pamphlet, each approving reader will also, as opportunity allows, do what is possible to promote its usefulness, it may be that through the instrumentality of this little reprint stimulus may be given to many through whose more prayerful and more earnest action, by the blessing of God, the number shall be greatly increased of those who, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, will unite in the glad acclaim, "*Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*"

B. BROOMHALL.

2 Pyrland Road,
London, N.

THE TRUE SOURCE OF MISSIONARY ZEAL.

By Rev. Alex. MacLaren, D.D.

I FEEL that it is a great honour and a still greater responsibility to stand here this afternoon to address theological and medical students. As I understand the object of our meeting, it is to try to lay the claims of the Missionary cause on the hearts of our younger brethren. I am the more glad to have a humble share in this matter because, as I construe the object of this meeting, it is neither in support nor in rivalry of any existing Missionary Society, but for the strengthening of all.

The Missionary spirit is nothing more than the Christian spirit turned in a definite direction; and therefore to attempt to excite the Missionary spirit without the deepening of the Christian disposition is all lost labour. I have the profoundest distrust of all attempts to work up Christian emotion or Christian conduct in any single direction apart from the deepening and the increasing of that which is the foundation of all—a deeper and a closer communion with Jesus Christ. And so I would urge my brethren to make *a definite and continual effort after nearer, deeper, more intimate, prayerful, ennobling, and constant communion with the*

source of all strength and of all righteousness. It is at Christ's feet that we learn to read our duty. It is there that duty becomes delight, and it is there that obedience becomes possible. The Christian life is only Christ's life in me, and is only to be mine if I keep very near the fountain and source of all. And if, dear brethren, we thus, day by day, and moment by moment, honestly, earnestly, prayerfully, seek to knit ourselves more closely to that dear Lord who is nearer to us than our own very hearts, then the life that comes from Him will be kindred with His, even as the seed brings forth in the likeness of the plant from which it fell; and by the might of a living sympathy with Him, and the derivation of His own Spirit into us, we shall have no spasmodic, or galvanised, or partial Missionary spirit, but we shall see the world with Christ's eyes looking beyond all the surface accidents down to the deep central realities of the case, and, like Him, weeping over that which to the common eye was but a source of gratulation, and seeing men—whatever else they may be—as sheep that have no shepherd if they have wandered away from Him. And oh, dear young friends, be sure of this: that there is nothing that will keep a man's heart sympathetically in touch with the necessities of a world that lies in evil except that communion with Jesus Christ. All attempts to make a Missionary spirit predominate or powerful in the Church which do not begin with the individual drawing nearer to Jesus Christ for himself are as vain and foolish as it is to move on the hands of a clock with your finger, instead of increasing the tension of the spring. You will only spoil the works, and as soon as the outward pressure is removed there will be the cessation of the motion. All other attempts are like trying to get to-

gether the surface drainage of the soil; but when we get into close grips with our Master for ourselves, and can say, "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God," then, and only then, we have gone down to the deep central sources, and the sympathy with the work for Missionary and all other Christian purposes rises inexhaustible, like an artesian well, from our deepest hearts.

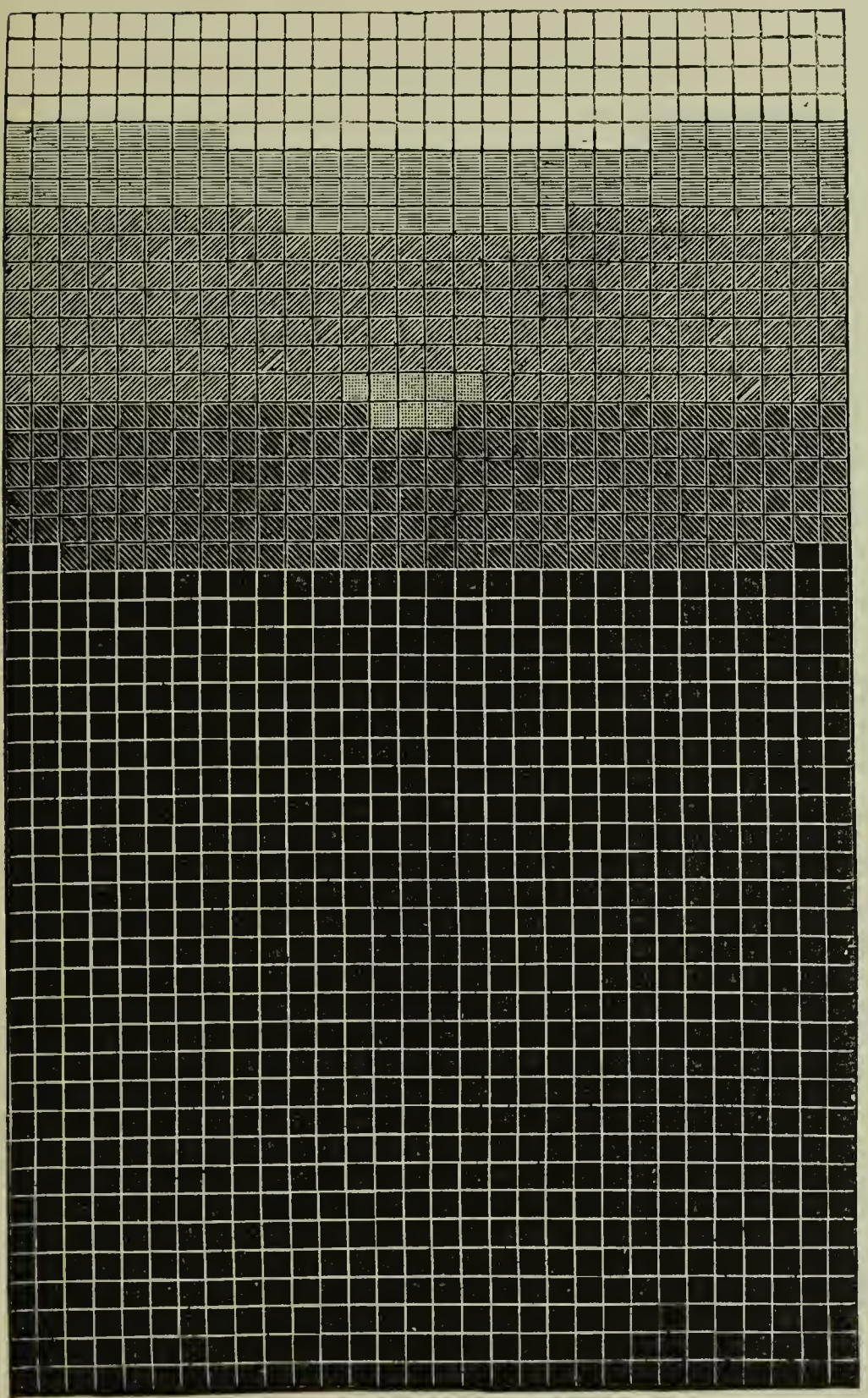
I venture to urge a second thing, and that is—*the firm grasp of and the continual reflection upon the fundamental Christian truths which underlie Christian Missions.* I put them all into the triumphant words of the Apostle John, "We know"—not "It appears to us on the balance of evidence on the whole pretty probable," nor "We give assent to it as a mere piece of dry theological dogma," nor "We would like to say, if we were not afraid of the cultivated people that laugh at us;" but "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in the wicked one, and we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ."

Translate that into modern language and it comes to this: the Christian man should have an intimate and irrefragable consciousness of the gravity, the reality, the universality of the fact of sin. He should have a certitude deep as the foundations of his own being of the fact that the Incarnate Son of God has come, and he should have a certainty of which all the inmost and most blessed experiences of his life are the attestations and the seals, that the gifts of the Son who has come are to us the grasp of the Divine Father, and the assurance that we are in Him—are to us the knowledge of Him that is true, are to us the indwelling in Jesus Christ. These

are the things that we have got to preach. These are the things which Missionary institutions exist to proclaim. These are the things which, if a man *knows*, the word will be like a fire in his bones, and he will be weary of forbearing and cannot stay. There are many temptations to doubt them to-day. There are many who tell us that we are following our own hallucinations, many that tell us that the world lies in no wicked one, that no Son of God has come, and that these inward consciousnesses are not reliable. All that I have got to say is this: as Martin Luther said in regard of the region of dogmatic theology that the test of a standing or a declining Church was the doctrine of justification, so I would venture to say that in the region of practical manifestation of the Christian life the test of a standing or a falling Church is its Missionary ardour, for that ardour will accurately correspond to the firmness of its grasp of these great central truths of which I venture now to speak. Wheresoever they are held slackly, Missionary enterprise, of necessity, is stricken with paralysis, for there is nothing to say to the world; and no man will ever be impelled to go forth as the messengers of the Cross have gone forth, with a Gospel of hesitation, or with anything short of the full-toned proclamation that Christ has died the world's Redeemer.

Then let me say one more thing, and that is that *a familiarity with and a prayerful reflection on the facts of the Missionary cause are as needful as the grasp of the principles that underlie it.* Have you studied this diagram, which shows us in picturesque form the extension, numerically, of Christianity and of other faiths? I have no head for statistics, and I get bewildered when people begin their calculations, but I can see a thing

Estimated Population of the World, 1,470,000,000.
Every Square represents One Million Souls.



PROTESTANTS,
135,000,000

GREEKS, &c.,
85,000,000

ROMAN
CATHOLICS,
195,000,000

JEWS,
8,000,000

MOHAMMEDANS,
173,000,000

HEATHEN,
874,000,000

when it is put down in a picture before me; and I want you, my dear young friends, to look at that ghastly parallelogram prayerfully and earnestly. It reminds me of the pathetic saying in one of the Old Testament books, where the camp of Israel is described as being like two little flocks of kids whilst the Assyrians filled the country. There is that little tiny piece of white up at the top, and to make that white all sorts of nominal Christians and real worldlings have had to be included; and then down below it darkens—darkens into the blackness of desolation and utter ignorance.

Do you believe that that was what Jesus Christ meant should be the world's condition nineteen centuries after He died? Surely no! And if we could take one of those little black squares, each of which represents a million souls and think away all the 999,999 and have one left, and could get inside of him and could see the dreariness that is there, the darkness, the terror, the torpor, the unrest, the black pall that wraps the future, shot only occasionally by lightnings that come from beyond, ah, we should not need much more to make us feel that heathenism is indeed the shadow, and to a large extent the substance, of death. Oh, dear friends, if on the one hand we listen to the commission which Dr. Taylor has been quoting—"Go ye and preach the Gospel to *every* creature," and, on the other hand, put emphasis upon the "*ye*," what a stringent obligation in view of such darkness comes upon all of us!

But there is another side to the fact. It is just as much a fact that young Christian men and women ought to lay to heart as the other, that every Christian Church has had its Missionary successes—that in every corner of the world these successes have been realised—that *Jesus*

Christ has proved Himself to be adapted and intended for the salvation of men of all sorts, orders, ages, conditions, idiosyncrasies, degrees of latitude and generations—the world's Saviour, who has never been and never will be preached in vain.

When I was coming up here I passed one or two abandoned coal-pits. There are no abandoned mines in this Missionary enterprise; nowhere where they have struck shafts and said, "It is of no use; there is nothing there." Always there has been gold, and always it has been possible by the Divine alchemy of that blessed Gospel to turn the vilest into the most precious and the sand into the gold of Sheba. These are facts, and I beseech you, young men, looking for a career in which success is certain, looking for a career in which there can be no remorse and no regrets and no failures, choose this great work to which the Master has called us all, and *remember that the possession of the Gospel, the world's condition being what it is, is the solemnest obligation to the proclamation of the Gospel.* See what was said even by those four leprous men that sat at the gate of the city. After they had eaten their fill, indeed—and that was selfishness and weakness—after they had got all that they wanted for themselves—they bethought themselves and said: "This is a day of good tidings and we do not well that we hold our peace; if we tarry till the morning light some evil will befall us." They felt the obligation of imparting the good news. Shall I quote the hackneyed old hymn?—

"Shall we whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high,
Shall we to men benighted
The lamp of life deny?"

And now to gather all that I have been saying into

a word or two. Will you let me ask you, dear young friends, to take all these truisms and platitudes of my address this afternoon and reflect upon them in their immediate bearing upon your conduct and your life? They tell us that at our Missionary meetings there is nothing said but the one old story over and over again. Perfectly true, but you know that there is an infallible way of making threadbare platitudes start into tremendous importance and freshness, and that is by laying them upon our own consciences and seeing what they have got to say to us individually about our special duty. I suppose that the Ten Commandments boast a pretty respectable antiquity, and have been repeated a considerable number of times without much variation, but if a man tries to keep them he will find out they have got teeth yet.

And so I ask you to take all these things and lay them on your hearts. You have got the supreme privilege that within certain defined limits you may become almost anything that you like. There may be some one here who needs but the final touch to impel him to this great work. There may be men here whom, in God's providence, He has appointed to be the apostles to nations that are sitting in darkness; and how we should all rejoice and be thankful that we have been permitted to take any part in this meeting if, as the issue of it, some such should be led to consecrate themselves to-day unto the Lord for this great service. Do not make Samuel's mistake and fancy that God's voice is Eli's. Be sure that it is He who speaks, and say "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth."

There is an old story in my country of a fight between clansmen, and the chief on the one side was surrounded by a band of his foster-brethren headed by the father,

and as the claymores swooped in the strong hands that wielded them, one after another of these brethren stepped in front of their brother and their chief, and one after another they fell, and ever as they fell the foster-father's voice rang out, "Another for Hector! Another for Hector!" and they died on the field. Many of our Missionary Societies have of late years been called to lament over sad and sore losses. The Society with which I have the honour to be connected in its great enterprise on the Congo has in that matter been sorely tried, and precious lives have been freely shed. Wherever there has been one vacancy there have been two to fill it. The call has not been heard in vain. I believe that the Master is calling to you, young men, who ought to feel that danger is an incentive and difficulty an inducement —calling to you to choose the heroic part which is His service in the regions beyond. "Another for Christ, and another, and yet another!" is the demand, and if there be faith and enthusiasm in the young Christianity of our Churches the call will not ring forth in vain.

An Address delivered to Theological and Medical Students at the Great Missionary Convention of Young Men, held in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, 15*th October* 1889.

THE MAIN INSTRUMENTAL FORCE OF MISSIONARY WORK.

By Rev. E. K. Alden, D.D.

IT is now one hundred and forty-five years since, in the month of October 1744, a company of ministers in Scotland were moved to call for a "united, extended application to God" for a general outpouring of the Holy Spirit "on all the churches of the Redeemer, and on the whole habitable earth." Their recommendation that the Saturday afternoon and Sabbath morning of each week, and more especially the first Tuesday of each quarter of the year, should be set apart for these sessions of united supplication was cordially responded to by many sympathising Christian hearts both in Great Britain and upon this side of the Atlantic. "Praying Societies," as they were termed, in considerable numbers were established and well sustained in both countries. A strong impulse was given to the movement by Jonathan Edwards in the preparation and sending forth of an elaborate treatise entitled "An humble attempt to promote explicit agreement and visible union of God's people in extraordinary prayer for the revival of religion and the advancement of Christ's kingdom on earth." Nearly forty years after this treatise was published it is alluded to by Andrew

Fuller in a private record, 9th July 1784, in these words: "Read to our friends this evening a part of Edwards's 'Attempt to promote prayer for a revival of religion,' to excite them to like practice." This was only a few days after the adoption of a resolution by the Nottingham Association of Baptist Ministers "recommending the setting apart of the first Monday evening in every month for prayer for the extension of the Gospel." This recommendation also was cordially welcomed, and a spirit of intercession, particularly for the spread of the Gospel throughout the world, began profoundly to move many Christian hearts and some Christian homes and churches on both sides of the ocean.

It was in this atmosphere that the English Baptist Missionary Society was born in 1792, the London Missionary Society in 1795, and the Church Missionary Society in 1800; while upon this side of the Atlantic there sprang up—in 1796 the New York Missionary Society, in 1798 and 1799 the Connecticut and Massachusetts Missionary Societies, and two or three years later the Hampshire Missionary Society, the Berkshire and Columbia Missionary Society, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, the Maine Missionary Society, and other similar associations, local in their name, but broad in their conception and plan, all preparing the way for the organisation, in 1810, of the American Board, the first distinctively Foreign Missionary Society on this continent.

These were all, in a pre-eminent degree, the fruits of prayer, and to a considerable degree of concerted prayer. We have only to read the biographies of their founders and of their first Missionaries, to be impressed by the fact that these men were, with scarcely an exception,

prayed into the kingdom, and prayed into the broad aggressive work of the kingdom, as the Lord's elect messengers and leaders. One little company, at an eventful hour, bowed together at the haystack in Williamstown, and their names are immortal; but this was but one of many praying circles whose united cry brought down the great blessing which was to follow. The significant fact in relation to the small company of men who went from Andover to Bradford upon the 26th and 27th June 1810 was that they were in a marked degree men of prayer. The significant fact in relation to the still smaller company who sat about the table in the Farmington parsonage upon the following 5th of September was that they also were men of prayer. No utterances of sermon or charge of fellowship, upon the 6th of February 1812, in the Tabernacle Church in Salem, were so impressive as not merely the uttered but the unuttered prayers which were lifting up the hearts of those who were the actors in that memorable scene.

There is no question that during the first generation of our Missionary history, as related to all departments of the work both at home and abroad, importunate pleading with God was relied upon as the main instrumental force, more important by far, however essential these may be, than money or men. The command of the Lord was recognised in its direct significance, "PRAY ye the Lord of the harvest, that He send forth labourers into His harvest."

Has this spirit survived during the two generations which have followed, and is it the burning thought in the hearts of those to whom this work is now entrusted at the close of this nineteenth century, as it was with

our fathers at the beginning of the century? Some things we have outgrown—we think we have—during our fourscore years. Have we lost our faith in prayer, or have we not? How far does earnest intercession enter into our working plans as a vital efficient force? These are plain practical questions and not unworthy our most serious consideration. Possibly they are at the present hour peculiarly timely.

MISSIONARY TESTIMONY.

If there are any persons from whom this Board, officers and members, would delight to hear upon this particular theme, it would be from the Missionaries at the front, particularly from veterans in the service. What those who led the way eighty, seventy, sixty years ago, and who have gone to their reward, thought of prayer we know full well. Their repeated testimony has been left behind them and we are familiar with it. Are the Missionaries of to-day men and women of the same spirit? Would their testimony be the same? It is a delicate question to ask and to answer. For the inner secrets of the heart are not readily disclosed even to the dearest earthly friend, much less to the public eye. But something even of this hidden life may be properly told at the appropriate time as testimony to the divine grace, even as the Psalmist bore witness, "I called upon the Lord and He heard me." Such is the testimony we now have the privilege of presenting from twenty-six living Missionaries of our own Board, representatives of nearly every one of our Missionary fields, all of them experienced in the work, testifying that which they know. Their names, of course, cannot be given, although one or two,

without betrayal of confidence, may be inferred. But the unity of their witness, personal and independent in each case, is exceedingly suggestive.

The points they emphasize are their absolute dependence upon unceasing communion with God in Christ as their vital breath and native air, without which they are utterly helpless; their particular need upon the Missionary field on account of their isolation and separation from the ordinary social religious influences of a Christian land; the continuous abundant evidence they have received that prayer is heard as related to themselves personally, their families, and the work in which they are engaged, both in the discharge of every-day duty and in hours of special emergency; and their appreciation of the importance of this theme in its practical bearing upon the responsibility of the churches at home.

Let us listen to some of these testimonies:—

"Prayer has been one of the prime factors of my Christian life, and next to the Bible has done more to develop and colour my Christian character—imperfect, of course, through the weaknesses of the flesh—than all other influences combined. I find that *the older I grow, the more do I long for and enjoy this most blessed of Christian privileges.* I do indeed feel that it is my 'vital breath,' my 'native air.' As respects its relation to the details of Missionary work, it is so far forth a positive force with me that I never undertake either the consideration of any question of detail, or its execution, without, in most cases, audible prayer for guidance, help, and blessing. The longer becomes my experience in Missionary work the more am I impressed with my own

insufficiency for these things, and the more humbly do I turn to the Lord, whose is the work, for the strength, wisdom, and grace with which to perform it. I feel that a work conceived in prayer and born in prayer, as this Missionary work assuredly was, must be sustained also and completed in prayer. . . ."

Another writes :—

"The Missionary has not the social and ecclesiastical supports of the pastor of a church at home, hence, even if his own inclinations do not lead him to communion with his heavenly Father, he is often brought to such extremities that he feels obliged to seek divine help and guidance. In the growth of the work great problems are constantly arising, which have no precedents to aid in their solution. He is not only building a spiritual temple, with materials which are crude and imperfect, but he is laying foundations for a Christian civilisation in the midst of opposition, and in the face of obstacles which at times seem appalling, and he often cries out, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' and the answer comes with a voice unmistakable, even if inaudible, 'My grace is sufficient for thee,' and so he is led to seek help from Him who alone is able to give help. My own experience has been that while there is no miraculous intervention, there is direct and positive help, and while there is no overruling or setting aside of human peculiarities or imperfections, if any man lacks wisdom he has simply 'to ask God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.' Another experience of the Missionary is the trial of his faith in matters more personal to himself. There is sickness in the family without the presence of a

physician; there are dangers from living and travelling among partially civilised, lawless, and fanatical people; and there is his greatest trial in putting oceans and continents between himself and his children. In order to 'abide under the shadow of the Almighty' he finds it necessary to dwell 'in the secret place of the Most High.' I have had frequent experiences in my own home and in my journeys, which have been so marked that I should deem it ingratitude not to recognise them as divine interpositions in answer to prayer.

"The confidence that God's care is in proportion to the extent and sincerity of our trust has, in my case, been built up in the face of natural doubt and unbelief; and the consciousness of the loving Father's presence and of the minuteness of His care is sufficient to sweeten all the difficulties and dangers of a way that would seem very rough without them. If this is superstition, it is delightful nevertheless. All this, besides being essential to our comfort and a help in the work, is a natural aid to spiritual life, by bringing us into communion and fellowship with the Fountain of life. The heart is purified by contact with the source of all purity; the faith is strengthened by a constant testing of the validity of the divine promises; and if with all these aids to a divine life one does not become a ripe Christian—alas! that we do not—it is his own fault."

Another from a different field thus testifies:—

"My strong conviction is that our success in the Missionary work depends chiefly on our keeping in close union and fellowship with Christ; and that this union, effected and maintained by the Holy Spirit, is nourished

on our part by constant watchfulness and prayer. *I could no more think of a fruitful spiritual life without frequent prayer, than of a vigorous physical life without breathing.* And prayer is needed not only at stated times, but there should be a constant looking to Him for help in the choice of means and methods and in the other details of our work. Our personal love for Christ and fellowship with Him are stimulated by prayerful study of His life and teachings, and the recognition of His personal interest in our sanctification and the salvation of mankind. I have found it helpful to make frequent use of prayers recorded in the Bible, such as Eph. iii. 14-19, and parts of John xvii., which were dictated by the Holy Spirit, and must therefore be according to His will. Prayer thus is petition, thanksgiving, and heart-communion with Christ."

The following earnest words are from still another field, from one of the advanced veterans :—

"I rejoice to add my testimony that prayer has a most important place in a Missionary's life and work. It is in prayer that he consecrates himself and his all to that work. As years go by he remembers and often renews that consecration. When heavily burdened with thoughts of the small number of fellow-labourers from among his own countrymen, or from natives of the land of his adoption, he lifts his heart most fervently to the Lord of the Harvest, that He would send forth more labourers into His harvest. Time and again, as our hearts believe, recruits have come to us in answer to such prayers. When saddened by divisions among the labourers, by opposition and persecution on the part of

enemies, by misapprehension of our motives and character, our strong consolation comes when we spread the case before the Lord. When rejoicing in the progress of the work we give thanks to God for the past, and we pray that for the future that progress may be more abundant and more rapid. The true Missionary never preaches a sermon, nor writes a book or tract, nor edits a newspaper, nor opens a school, nor attends a church meeting, never tries to give counsel to those who ask it, but he begins his work and continues it with prayer. The weapon on which he most depends is 'All-Prayer.' *The most successful Missionary is the one who relies on prayer.* Said a diligent, successful worker, 'I would rather have the help of Sister ——'s prayers than any other help.'"

Let us listen to the fervent, flowing utterances of one of these beloved Missionary sisters:—

"Prayer is the key to the Missionary's life. It is the foundation of his work. 'Where shall we go on our next tour?' Can it be settled without prayer? 'How long shall we stay in each place?' 'Is this the right road on which we are?' and no human being in view on all this desolate wintry landscape. 'What souls shall we meet to-day in our work from house to house, and with what needs, temptations, and crises of life?' Such are some of the questions to be carried to God in prayer. . . . Prayer is the eye of the Missionary worker. He is blind without it. I should say, let the Missionary who *stops praying* about every plan he forms, every effort he makes for souls, every influence he seeks to exert, consider that his work has ceased. His Master calls for no prayerless service.

"This life of prayer must be sustained, first, by early rising to be alone with God; second, by the habit of frequent uplifting of the heart to God *wherever* we are; third, by uniting frequently, and with *fervent desire* and *sense of need*, with others in the family or Missionary circle to spread all our wants before God. This latter is promotive of love and sympathy. When long and dangerous journeys are to be taken, we go in the strength of the knowledge that the dear ones here are praying for us. Shall I give you testimony from the poor people about us? A very poor woman in a near village, who is a Bible-teacher in the winter and works in the fields in the summer, her husband being far away in Russia unheard from and forgetting, was last summer out on the plain trying, with her children, to glean in the harvest-fields. Every grain of wheat seemed to have been gathered, and in despair and tears she collected her children about her and said, 'Let us pray. O God, thou knowest how hungry we are and that we must have bread. Please show us some place to glean.' 'Mamma, I saw a good place over there which every one seemed to have forgotten,' suddenly burst from the lips of her little son, as she finished. She went where he led and found an abundance, which no eye had seen and which the master of the field allowed her to gather!"

Listen now to a remarkable testimony from Japan:—

"My experience and observation lead me to feel that prayer is one of the greatest forces in a Missionary's life, character, and work. We are naturally led to realise this more, perhaps, than workers in Christian lands, for the reason that we are made to feel the utter impotence of

the human means at our command to accomplish the great work we have come to do. A handful of men and women in the midst of forty millions of heathen, with no God, no Sabbath, prejudiced against us and against the message we have come to deliver! *what can we do but cry mightily unto God?* The Missionary who did not believe in and practise prayer under such circumstances would give up in despair and go home. . . .

"Another experience came in the fall of 1882 and spring of 1883. I found that a spirit of speculation and doubt of many of the vital doctrines of the Gospel had come into the school and was also among some of the pastors as well. The preaching was too much of a speculative, philosophical character. Doubts of the divinity of Christ, and especially of the reality of the Holy Spirit, were rife in our school, even among some of the teachers. I felt a great agony of prayer for this, as did some of my colleagues. When the Week of Prayer came, the first of January, it passed without any special results, and we held it over a second week, having a general meeting every evening to pray especially for the outpouring of God's Spirit upon the school. But no result came. Then a little band of perhaps ten held on, praying daily for this object. The first part of February I felt prompted to write a letter stating the spiritual condition of the school and our needs, and asking for special prayer for the outpouring of God's Spirit upon the school. I made forty copies of it and sent them to most of our colleges and theological seminaries in the United States. The weeks wore on and there was no sign here. The little band of praying ones had decreased to half a dozen. On Sabbath, the 16th of March 1883, in the afternoon and evening an

invisible influence struck the school. None of the teachers knew of it until the next morning. But of the about one hundred and fifty young men then in the school, very few closed their eyes in sleep that night. Almost every room was filled with men crying to God for mercy. The professing Christians were at first under the deepest conviction of sin. This experience lasted a week, during which time there was no preaching. The whole movement was to human eye spontaneous, and the only efforts almost which the teachers put forth were to restrain from excesses and guide the inquiring souls into the light. All but four or five who were in the school passed through this experience, and the work spread from our school to the churches in this part of Japan, and this revival changed the whole spirit of our school. There have been no doubts since that time of the existence and work of the Holy Spirit. About the middle of April answers to my letters came, and they told us that on March 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and on, companies were praying for the outpouring of the Spirit upon the Doshisha, some of them saying that they were praying with strong crying and tears."

A veteran writes :—

"In attempting to formulate my thought in regard to prayer, I have realised more clearly than ever before how much it transcends all power of language either to explain its nature or to describe its working force as an element of Christian life. My experience and testimony in regard to it are simply this : The more I live in prayer the more broadly and profoundly do I recognise it as a living communion with God, giving me the unspeakable privilege

and comfort of unreserved confidence in Him, enabling me to understand His sympathy with me and with all His creatures, to comprehend in the light of His character and presence the real significance of my most secret impulses and desires, and giving me the most satisfactory assurance I can have of the wisdom and goodness of His plans, of which every event of my life is a part. I find this communion also a wonderful source of strength and courage, and one from which the highest and best purposes of life are constantly set before me and urged upon me. I have also what seems to me frequent proof and illustration of God's favour and help granted in answer to prayer, and this experience has perfected in me a firm confidence that in every emergency He will, in answer to prayer, provide for me all needed aid. I can only add that in all these respects prayer is infinitely more than I can express."

Another writes:—

"To myself prayer is a positive force, a real power; the throne of grace is my place of refuge, and *without it I could not have endured thirty years of Missionary life.* I am convinced, too, by abundant observation, that in the opinion and conviction of the evangelical Christians of Turkey, prayer is a vital power. I have personally known many poor women, many distressed brethren, and not a few dying saints who have been sustained both in life and death by the access they have had to God in prayer.

"Your Missionaries are but men, in Christian character not yet 'perfect' (1 Cor. ii. 6). Is it possible that some of those who send us forth forget this fact? The Missionary enterprise is one. To make it fruitful of blessing

to the nations of the earth, the seed of faith must first be planted by those who stand at the head of the enterprise. God will give them measure for measure—a full measure of blessing for a full measure of faith, sincerity, and earnestness. Oh, do not let our American supporters point to their Missionaries as models of spirituality and consecration, and imagine that their Missionaries, if only sustained pecuniarily, *will* succeed. Success is from God, and the very thing in which Missionaries are lacking is the 'power from on high' which God only can bestow. We must throw the responsibility for success largely on the Christians at home, many of whom in maturity of Christian character and consecration to God are nobly fitted to help us by their prayers. If Paul felt the need of the prayers of Christian brethren, what, alas, will the Missionaries of the present age accomplish unless those who send them forth pray for them, believingly and earnestly? Missionaries have had all the success their faith and efforts deserved—enough to keep them from fainting; but the grand results of Missionary effort still remain to be secured in answer to the united and hearty supplications of both Missionaries and their supporters."

Another bears witness for himself and his wife:—

"Jesus Christ is to me a present, personal friend, infinitely willing and able to help. I realise in some good degree that we can do nothing without His aid, and that we can do all things with it. I have no doubt that He wishes us to be in constant communion with Himself and to ask what we will; and if it is best He will surely hear us. Hence, *prayer becomes a part of my very life.* It is a duty, a precious privilege, and a necessity. It has

become to me a second nature. In all our plans and work, in all our hopes and anxieties, it is natural to seek His blessing and guidance. Many times we cannot tell just how our prayers are answered, yet I fully believe that He hears us. Sometimes answers seem to come direct, and sometimes in unexpected ways. As to Mrs. ——, you might as well try to shake her belief in her own existence as her confidence that God hears prayer. And her daily life and all her work is greatly influenced by this confidence; and she is quick to recognise the answers when they come. I have thus, at your request, drawn aside the veil for a little from our 'Holy of holies.'"

Another responds :—

"In answer to your request I would say that prayer is a vital force to the Missionary. It is the breath of life to himself and to his household. He goes out to a foreign land from the sacred precincts of a Christian home, he leaves behind him the priceless influences of Christian parents, brothers, and sisters, and he goes out to plant a new home in a strange land, in the midst of untoward influences of all kinds. What are his resources? They are not to be found anywhere about him. Oceans roll between him and the treasuries of the Christian home land. His resources are in God. They are locked up in His treasury, but he has *the key to that treasury;* he always carries it with him; it *is prayer.* And if in the history of Christ's kingdom Missionary households have ever held an honoured place as the abodes of God's love and grace, it is because the key of prayer has been worn bright by turning in that lock. Prayer is the source of the Missionary's power in the new community where he is

placed. It is the bond which connects the great pulley of God's power with the little pulley of our lives and work. There is something audacious in the thought of transforming an ungodly city or nation by throwing into them a few Missionary lives. It would be as preposterous as audacious if it did not mean more than it seems to mean on the face of it. It does really mean the opening of heaven's batteries in that city or nation, the bringing of heaven's transforming power to bear upon them. It is throwing light into the midst of darkness. But a Missionary is worth nothing if not connected with the centre where power is generated. My own experience is that a Missionary's life is one of continued and continual prayer. As we travel over the wild mountainous regions which surround us, we pray in summer to be delivered from robbers, and in winter to be delivered from wolves. A native brother recently said that the Missionaries are neither afraid of robbers nor of wolves. Now this is not true, but it is true that Missionaries travel under a solemn sense of responsibility as God's messengers. They refuse not to go because they are sent, and they commit themselves to Him who sends them in continual prayer. While on a journey not so very long ago, to a Turk whose looks were not particularly reassuring, and who asked me who I was, I replied, 'God's preacher.'

"But we are not always called in our lonely journeys to prayer for protection. Our souls many times go out to God in the prayer of praise and adoration, and solitary places echo to such communings with the all-adorable One. In adoring prayer the highest powers of the Missionary's soul are brought into exercise, and this results in true spiritual vigour. Indeed, I do not know what can sustain a Missionary and keep him from leaving

the work or breaking down early, except this exhilarating communion with his God.

"We are often called to stand before rulers for the defence of the interests of God's work. It will never be known how often prayer to God has inclined the hearts of rulers to be favourable to our requests. Even when the strongest opposition has been met, prayer has at last broken down opposition. The granting of the permission to build the Collegiate and Theological Institute of Samokov has always seemed to me a most wonderful answer to prayer. The work had been stopped by the Government for months, and enemies of the work had rejoiced over the unfinished undertaking, when God opened the way for obtaining permission by the fall of the first Bulgarian Ministry which had steadily refused to allow us to go on. 'The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord.' The most powerful revival we ever had in our Institute was that of 1883. That revival was preceded by a season of special soul-burdened prayer. Our lives and work are, indeed, so full of answers to prayer that we seem to walk in the very presence of the Almighty. And to me it is not only no hardship to believe in the doctrine of God's special providence, but this doctrine is an ever-present source of strength and comfort."

A voice from one of the solitary watchers upon the Micronesian Islands:—

"My first thought as I read your question was, *Prayer is the mainspring of all Missionary effort*, and as I have given the subject thought from time to time during these few days I find this thought growing into a strong con-

viction. In worldly enterprises success is often measured by the determination, energy, wisdom, perseverance of those engaged. A Missionary needs all these, yet with them and without prayer and firm belief in the efficacy of prayer, I see little hope of success. It seems to me that a Missionary without prayer would be like an agent going to the ends of the earth to represent some mercantile firm without being duly appointed and having no established means of communication between himself and headquarters. Then, too, the Missionary work depends so largely upon the aid and work of the Holy Spirit, whose blessed presence and power are promised to those who ask, that I do not see any hope for it without earnest, prevailing prayer. How can we be strong in the Lord to wrestle against principalities and powers and darkness and spiritual wickedness if we do not pray always?"

Another writes:—

"In thinking of a suitable reply to your inquiries I find myself dwelling first of all upon the strange fact that God does not allow us to make a misuse of prayer as a selfish and personal instrument. Prayer seems to me a sweet and gracious relationship between God and the soul that loves God and waits upon Him. It is the divine method of spiritual discipline and culture. It is *the blessed means of bringing God near to men.* Without prayer Christ is no present Christ but a figment or an image. Without prayer life is isolated and friendless, engulfed in mystery as well as sorrow, which leads to dulness of thought and aimlessness of purpose.

"Prayer seems to be the soul's window into heaven. The light comes through it. Warmth of love comes

through it. Sweet visions of Christ come through prayer. Spiritual discipline and development come by prayer. Faith flows from it. Courage is its fruit. Patience in discipline is born of it. By the experiences of prayer and its gracious empowerment, the servant of Christ realises Paul's description of love. Under prayer we bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, endure all things. Only through prayer can men beget the spirit of the victory that overcometh the world. If this be the individual experience, the general experience is the same, but intensified and verified by its wide expansion. The Church grows rich in its faith and love and holy efforts of charity and purpose, as its members grow into such united spiritual life through prayer."

Another voice from China :—

"Your question at the first reading seemed a little strange to me, something as it would seem to ask a man, 'What in your opinion is the place of food as a source of strength in building up the body and fitting it to accomplish its best work?' Prayer in my experience and observation is not an *incident* but an *essential* in the Christian life. The Apostles directed that deacons should be appointed in the infant Church, that they might have time to give themselves up to prayer and the preaching of the Word. No Christian is born without prayer; *no one makes progress in the Christian life without prayer;* no Christian work is successfully accomplished without prayer. The spirit of prayer is the infallible thermometer by which the spiritual life of the Church may be known. Our own little mission church was born of prayer, and every bud and flower of promise has been watered with

prayer. Some years ago an old man, then an utter heathen, seeing one and another of his acquaintances professing Christianity, and knowing that the church had earnestly prayed for them, made the funny but true remark: 'I tell you, this praying, praying is no plaything;' and now the old man himself, though wholly palsied and unable to move even on his bed, is rejoicing in a Christian hope, his heart being softened to listen to the truth after the long and earnest prayers of his son and others in the church. His son is one of our most valued native helpers, and he has no doubt of the power of prayer.

"Who would sow seed on a granite rock and expect to reap a harvest? But the Missionary's work among the heathen, without help from God, is even a more hopeless work. The heathen tell us constantly, 'Your teachings are very good, but our hearts are very hard, there is no use of your expecting to change us.' And this is true if there is no divine power to descend in answer to prayer, to soften men's hearts and draw them to the truth. We need more Christian workers; we need more gifts from the churches to sustain the work, but above all, we need more of the spirit of importunate, prevailing prayer, that pleads the divine promises of blessing, and is the condition of any special manifestation of divine power in the conversion of men."

A beloved sister from one of our pioneer Missions in Africa thus responds:—

"I gladly comply with your request for a few words of testimony as to the place and power of prayer. Prayer is the Missionaries' 'vital breath.' Without constant,

earnest pleading and looking up to Him in whom our strength lies, we are undone. *Prayer and love go hand in hand.* Without love in our hearts for these poor degraded souls, we can never reach them. And we must constantly pray for wisdom, patience, and love, that we do not 'offend' one for whom Christ died. Prayer and works go together. Let the Missionary cease to pray and he might as well return to his native land. He needs conversion. 'Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed.' It has many a time been a comfort to me when the burden has been too great to bear alone, and I could not go to God on my knees. And I am convinced that we lose many a blessing because we do not pray more.

"We cannot live upon the prayers of other people, much as we need them and helpful as they are; each soul must come to God for himself. Nor is the heart petition or closet hour sufficient. The Missionary must have his family altar, and it must be sustained as one of the necessities of our life, as it really is. Not only when it is convenient, or on a Sabbath morning, but daily. Those about us are influenced by it more than we know. They come to believe in prayer, and learn from us to pray for themselves. I firmly believe in answer to prayer in small things as well as great. We love to have our little ones come and ask of us. Is not the great, loving heart of the Father infinitely more tender than ours?"

Another personal testimony:—

"While I have no list of particular events to refer to, as proving the efficacy of prayer in special cases, I have a profound and all-prevailing conviction of the significance

of it. I have had, in my own experience, many a time, the sweet and solemn sense of having spoken to God and been heard by him—of asking for things and getting them, or better things, though I have never kept formal records of such matters. But far more important, in my view, than all this, is *the place of prayer as the means of union with God.* If it be true of any Christian, that 'only while he prays, he lives,' it is emphatically true of a Missionary in a foreign land. When the Missionary ceases to live by prayer, he had better go home. I shrink from giving much personal experience in particular cases, but I do desire to say gravely and earnestly that my Missionary life has been successful so far as I have been prayerful, and non-successful so far as I have been lax in prayerfulness. What difficulties I have been carried through, what burdens I have been enabled to bear by the help of God obtained through prayer, simple and direct!"

The next testimony is from one whose ripe Christian experience and prolonged Missionary service give emphasis to her words:—

"I have long delayed a reply to your queries on prayer as exemplified in a Missionary's life. I seem at a loss for words. One might as well attempt going into a dark and unknown land never having and never expecting sunlight as to attempt to follow so closely the life of the great Master without freedom of access to Him in prayer. He who said 'I am the Light of the world' expects His devoted servant to rejoice in Him, to be guided by Him, to be comforted by Him; and He is thus rejoiced, thus guided, thus comforted.

"Prayer is the natural outcome of consecration to

Missionary life and devotion to it and in it. Knowing that all success in winning souls to Christ must correspond to the shining forth of the life of Christ within, the Missionary comes to the risen Lord in freedom and dependence, to prepare the soul to be reached, to give the saving message, to care for the result of the effort, and, oh, sweet satisfaction! to inspire faith for work done to-day and planned for to-morrow. There is a wonderful *abandon* when the pressed worker simply and firmly trusts his Lord to set his soul on fire, to use his thoughts as His own and to create upon the lips words as shall no more go void than words from divine lips. *All this comes from prayer*, whether it be as the breath of the soul in heavenly air or strong crying and tears from out of the bonds and afflictions of earth.

"And then the unspeakable comfort in exile in the time of great anxiety and in the oft-recurring periods of carefulness and burden of doubt as to duty, this access to Him who knows all and loves better even than He knows, brings the serenity which clarifies judgment and uplifts and blesses in a conscious interpretation of the sublime promise, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.'"

One testimony further from another beloved sister who has laboured much in the Lord:—

"From my experience in regard to prayer I can truly say, 'Prayer is the Christian's vital breath.' How can one be like Christ without a vital connection with the triune God through prayer? Would not one be a mere machine, or, as Moody puts it, 'a galvanised corpse'? True, we find in these dead churches those who wear the Christian name and belong to a Christian church, but

they have no likeness to Christ, and He would say, 'I never knew you.' 'Through Christ strengthening me I can do all things,' is not alone Paul's grand tonic; but every Christian 'who dwells in the secret place of the Most High' has felt its invigorating influence.

"*To the Missionary, prayer is his sheet-anchor.* Take this away, and we should all come home. It is more. It is our cablegram, our telegraph, and telephone. We are sometimes away down in the bottom of the pit. What should we do could we not just telegraph to the court of heaven for help? The pit is dark and deep, no human hand can help us! It is then that we learn the worth and wealth of prayer. The heavenly summons comes to us, 'I am thy God.' Yes, the very pit becomes a Holy of Holies because of the presence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is thus we learn to know God, what He can and will do for us. Romance may and often does help a Missionary as long as the steamboats and railways last, yes, over the hard and weary inland journey; but when the hard places, so well known to every true Missionary, come, he or she must have something besides romance—communion: daily, hourly communion with the eternal God can alone sustain. It is thus we learn what it is to pray always. God often has to give us the lesson to learn over, but if we are to succeed we must learn this lesson by heart. Why, prayer is our great Corliss engine, which moves all the smaller machinery; the fulcrum that Archimedes sought, on which to rest the lever to move the world. We do mean that we need your prayers when we ask for them, though many may think they are pious words. Let them come and they too will write back the same. I truly believe if the Christians of this nineteenth century would use the power God has vouchsafed to them,

the world would be converted to Christ before the dawn of the twentieth century."

These Missionary testimonies might be multiplied indefinitely. Indeed, were we in telephonic communication with our Missionary stations and with our Missionaries throughout the world, and could they send us here assembled their one emphatic request in a single sentence, it would be the same—the same urgent request long ago uttered by the first illustrious Missionary to the Gentile world, "Pray for us." This call, always imperative, is pressed upon us now with peculiar emphasis by several considerations.

I.—THE OPPORTUNITY.

In the first place, never was there a time when it could be said with so much significance that *our Missionary opportunity is literally unlimited.* . . . "Wide-open doors in every direction waiting for the messengers of peace." Such, we repeat, is our opportunity to-day, something which our fathers and their fathers never knew, something which the Church of God up to this hour has never had placed before it. When we surrender our hearts to the significance of this fact it is simply overpowering. We must bow down before God with mighty importunate supplication, that we may somehow be made equal to our hour or we lose our own souls.

II.—THE NEED.

The great opportunity suggests the great need. There was probably never a time when the difficulties which spring up in connection with the prosecution of the Missionary work were more clearly discerned than they are to-day. We have learned that it is no holiday service

to undertake to overthrow the gigantic systems of heathenism which have been entrenched for centuries, and which hold in bondage so many millions. And the problem in nominally Christian lands occasionally seems in certain of its aspects even more perplexing. It is not strange that those who undertake this service are sometimes appalled at the apparent hopelessness of the task, and feel themselves almost literally overwhelmed. How can these few men and women, strangers in a strange land, lift up this burden of ignorance, degradation, superstition, awful vice, and barbarity, which have been accumulating for generations? "It is not the isolation from home," one of them writes, "not the absence from friends, not the lack of mail, that wears us, but the hand-to-hand fight with sin, with the terrible feeling of oppression it brings." A perishing world of sinners self-destroyed, cherishing their sin, these wretched, guilty millions all around us laid upon a few sensitive, sympathising hearts to be delivered and saved! "Who is sufficient for these things?" Would any person undertake it, could any person be sustained in it, except he have continuous access to the infinite Source of strength?

"If there be a class of persons on earth," writes the same witness, "who need the prayers of all, it is that of Missionaries. Pray most that we may abound in love towards those who are around us. They are ignorant, deceitful, ungrateful, and unwholesome; and unless the Holy Spirit constantly excites us to the exercise of the most disinterested benevolence, we are in danger of despising them and of exulting in our own superiority. Familiarity with their wretchedness also has a tendency to diminish that warmth of sympathy with which we have been accustomed to regard those who are destitute

of the Gospel. . . . You know not what unlooked-for conflicts and obstacles you would find were you transported to this region of darkness, this empire of Satan. Pray for me incessantly and fervently; for foes without and foes within obstruct every path to heaven."

Who shall select and summon the consecrated labourers for such a service as this? Who shall replenish their ranks and multiply their number? Who shall endue them with power from the Holy Ghost so that their courage shall never fail, and all graces shall be in them and abound? It is not at all surprising that the uniform testimony of all our Missionary labourers is that if they could not pray they could not live. And those who sympathise with them most intelligently through their intimate acquaintance with the details of the work share in the same feeling. The cry of absolute need is incessant through all the days of the year; it is the cry of starving millions for bread; it comes in various forms from various directions: sometimes it is a plaintive moan, and sometimes it is a piercing shriek; but it is literally continuous through winter's cold and summer's heat, from Africa, and India, and Turkey, and China, and Japan, and the islands of the sea, and Papal lands; they give us no rest day nor night, and there is but one deliverance. We must either be driven into insanity; or become hardened to the cry, which would be worse than insanity; or pour out our hearts to God among the watchmen "who never hold their peace day nor night," finding thus our only absolute repose either of body or spirit. There are no words which can adequately describe the continuous Missionary cry of need, and there are no human hearts, however sympathetic, which can adequately meet it. There is but One heart which is equal to this burden, the heart of

Him who bore it as no mere man could ever bear it, and who has laid it in its measure upon His disciples, who are appointed thus "to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ," until this lost world, through travail of soul, is brought back to God.

"The burden which rests upon us is not simply a proclamation of the Gospel among the heathen, but *such a proclamation of it as shall save the soul.* If we fail of this we fail of our object altogether. I do not say that we do no good, but we fail of the object we have in view —of that which is the very soul of our enterprise. We are not a society for promoting civilisation or literature or the arts, but for saving men; and the great reason why this is not more fully accomplished is because our Missionaries and our Board, and the Christian public who act with us, are not more ready to take up just the burden which is necessary to accomplish this.

"This is not the giving of money. Money cannot convert a soul. Any amount of this may be given, and nothing be effected, except that a certain sum has changed hands. Money! why, the heathen give far more money for the support of the pomps and follies of their religions than we do for the spread of ours. It is not the establishment of seminaries, or of printing-presses, or of any external apparatus. No; but it is that constraining love of Christ and that sense of the infinite value of salvation which leads the Missionary to *preach the Word* in season and out of season, to testify publicly and from house to house of the grace of God; which would lead our Missionary Boards and the Christian public to sympathise with the Missionaries in these feelings, and to sustain them constantly in the arms of faith and of prayer; which would fill the monthly concerts all over the land, and cause those

who were there to wrestle with God as did Jacob, and to say to him, 'We will not let thee go, except thou bless us.'

"It is one thing to give money, and print reports, and go across the ocean and establish a station, and print books, and tell them something of the Christian religion and how it differs from theirs, and quite another to go to them as Brainerd did to his poor Indians, as those who are under the wrath of God, who must accept of His mercy in Christ or perish, and by the very agony of prayer, and the earnestness of preaching connected with it, to be the means of such outpouring of the Holy Spirit and of such manifest and surprising conversions to God. Those Indians have probably had no agency in perfecting society upon earth,—their very tribes have perished,—but they now shine as stars in the crown of their Redeemer; and those conversions were worth more than all the results of great meetings and speeches and munificent donations from which the spirit of prayer and of God is absent, and which are not connected with the salvation of the soul. There was connected with them more true Missionary labour.

"That we have failed, and that this has been our great failure, of taking up this burden as we ought, there can be no doubt. Whether wrong principles have in any case been adopted in pursuing things incidental too much, I cannot say, but they certainly have been pursued too exclusively. There has been a withdrawing of the spirit from those higher regions of spiritual sympathy and struggle, and communion with Christ in the fellowship of His sufferings; and all the channels of that sympathy have been left empty and dry; and so while there has been external activity, and some good has been done, there has yet, around many of the Missionary stations, not been

the greenness and verdure which we hoped to see. So has it been, so it is now. And unless this Board and its friends come together with the confession of their sin in this, and with a readiness to assume this burden more fully for the future, and to cast themselves upon the Lord that they may be sustained in bearing it, then that which is really the cause of Missions will go backwards, and we shall have perplexities and burdens come upon us as judgments, and under them God will not sustain us."

How absolutely such a thought as this bows down the Lord's people in the midst of the perishing millions of lost men, in continuous intercessory prayer, they only know who feel it.

III.—THE CRITICAL EMERGENCY.

The greatness of the opportunity and the greatness of the need suggest *the critical emergency of the hour and the possibility of a great deliverance.*

"It is a crisis to-day," we are emphatically told, "with Japan, and what you do you must do quickly." These words are none too emphatic. It is indeed a crisis with Japan in a sense far more profound than the utterance of this sentence usually implies. Something far beyond civilisation or education or political advancement is at stake in Japan, even the eternal destiny of undying souls. This is the crisis with Japan. But it is the crisis also with China. It is the crisis with India. It is the crisis with Africa. It is the crisis with the entire generation of men now living on the earth in every land. The work which God gives His people in any particular generation is a contemporaneous work for that entire generation. Who dare select any one favoured people, be it America or be it Japan, and say that for this generation all thought

and effort may concentrate upon that one people, and the rest of the world may wait until their hour shall come? Who ever gave any man authority to say that China must wait, or India must wait, or Africa must wait, or those bowed down under Papal superstition must wait, or the 175,000,000 under the heel of Islam must wait? Are these the "marching orders" of the Great Commander? No. We must lay aside such thought and such utterances as these or we fail to comprehend the true "Crisis of Missions." The crisis is the crisis of a generation, a double crisis — (1) the crisis of the perishing millions themselves asking, during that generation, for the bread of life, and (2) the crisis of the believing people of God during the same generation, who are under orders to proclaim the good tidings immediately, to the extent of their ability, throughout the entire world. How that crisis is to be met is a serious question indeed, and a most practical question. And whoever grapples with it will at first be overwhelmed and will fall prostrate before God in earnest supplication to Him alone who can wisely and safely guide. Then shall the divine Providence direct alike as to place and person and concentration of labour, but never for a moment permitting us to forget that the critical "to-day" belongs contemporaneously to every people, nay, to every accountable soul of the entire generation. Some generation will yet arise when the Lord's people will recognise this momentous fact so seriously that they will accept both the responsibility and the honour, and will go forth in the Lord's name, pouring out their hearts in united, fervent prayer, dividing the provinces of the world among them, and taking immediate possession under the guidance and to the glory of the Great Captain of their salvation. Who knows but this

may be the favoured generation? So Edwards asked one hundred and forty years ago; so with more significance our fathers asked sixty years ago; and so, even more emphatically, may we ask to-day.

There is no reason why in our own time the Word of God should not be carried within the reach, substantially, of all the peoples of the earth, provided we use the resources at our disposal. There are messengers enough, there is treasure enough in the hands of the Lord's anointed people at this very hour to proclaim the good tidings not only all over Japan, but all over China and India and Africa, as well as over the nominally Christian nations and the islands of the sea. There is no reason why the people of God should be appalled by Buddhism, or Mohammedanism, or the Papacy, or modern Infidelity, any more than they once were by the paganism of ancient Rome, or the savage barbarism of our own Anglo-Saxon ancestors. They are helpless before any foe, however seemingly feeble, if they go forth in their own strength; and they are equal to any emergency and can storm any fortress, however impregnable as it appears to human vision, when they go forth with united, expectant prayer in the name of God. But the prayer is the main thing, and will carry with it everything else. Let this mighty force be wielded as it may be by the Lord's united people, remembering, as it has been tersely expressed, that "we are responsible not only for all we can do ourselves, but for all we can secure from God," and there will be no lack of consecrated money and no lack of consecrated men. The Lord, who knows His anointed instruments, will select and summon and send them forth, and there will be no question as to their fitness or as to their success.

As expressed by the preacher[1] at one of our annual meetings several years ago: "*Our duty all converges to a single point. It is prayer, prayer—prayer for the Spirit—that we need.* Such prayer as was offered by that little band that waited at Jerusalem for the promise of the Father. Such prayer as Brainerd offered on the banks of the Susquehanna, and Martyn on the plains of India. Such prayer as was offered by the dying Backus when he asked for the privilege of getting out of his bed to lift up his soul once more to God. This is a blessing which we cannot do without."

"Missionary work," said the chairman of the London Missionary Society at its late annual meeting, "has been consecrated by prayer, and has been strengthened and developed from generation to generation by prayer, and it is by prayer as one of the chief agencies that it must be carried on to perfected and happy consummation."

Oh, that the "Missionary revival," of which mention has so often been made of late, might express itself in all our pulpits, in all our churches, in all Christian hearts, by earnest, sustained, prevalent intercession for the immediate and continuous outpouring of the Holy Spirit throughout the world! "YE THAT ARE THE LORD'S REMEMBRANCERS, TAKE YE NO REST, AND GIVE HIM NO REST TILL HE ESTABLISH AND TILL HE MAKE JERUSALEM A PRAISE IN THE EARTH."

From "THE PLACE OCCUPIED IN MISSIONARY WORK BY PRAYER," *a Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions by* Rev. Dr. Alden, *Home Secretary.*

[1] Rev. David Magie, D.D.

IF TWO OF YOU SHALL AGREE, Etc.
(Matt. xviii. 19.)

By Rev. Archibald Scott, D.D.

In regard to our Foreign Mission, we are at present in need of almost everything. We are greatly in need of money, and we are sorely in need of Missionaries; but what we want most is life and an increase of spiritual power. A new birth in the soul or in the Church always brings its own power and beauty along with it. Money will flow in streams to God's treasury, and men will offer themselves in companies, and our Missionary enterprise will expand into Missions worthy of the name, when the enthusiasm of Christ, the fire of the Holy Ghost, possesses the Church—never till then. The real complaint of our Lord against us may not be concerning the withholding of our money or of our service, but the withholding of ourselves; and if this be so, it must be because we have not *received* Him in the fulness of His grace and power. We cannot give what we have not really gotten. So instead of beseeching us to give Him a little more of our money, He may be rather imploring us by the mercies of God to receive His unsearchable riches.

It is well that the present stir about Missions is disclosing the apathy that exists in many quarters of the Church. The discovery of that apathy does not make it a new thing; but as with sin in the individual heart, it

is really the first step towards its removal. God's Spirit must bring it to light, and convince us of it, before we ask Him to breathe upon and take it all away. So, though many may well be dispirited by the present condition of things, we need not despair. Till God's power really diminishes, there is no cause for fear. If only two persons were concerned about our Missions, and were pleading with God to give us what we need for it, His promises would be as unfailing to those two as they would be to half a million of people. . . .

We believe that we are in this condition because we have asked not, or because we have asked amiss; and so our necessity becomes a valuable opportunity of carefully examining ourselves. We may be sure that we are not straitened in God, and that the hindrance is not in Him. The hindrance must be wholly in ourselves. We may not be sufficiently enlarged to receive the mighty gift which He desires to bestow. By what is happening abroad, He evidently desires to cleanse us of all vanity, and of all trust in the creature; and at home He seems to be teaching us the very elementary lesson that we must look to Him for our resources, and learn to be content to wait for Him. We must not fret because He does not answer the moment we begin to cry. Verily we have need of patience—and we may have to cultivate long patience—but if we wait truly, as the Church did in the upper room, with one accord, with souls directed intently upward, we shall not wait in vain. No sign, small even as a little cloud, like a man's hand, may indicate the answer to our crying; but we shall surely hear by and by the sound of abundance of rain.

From *The Church of Scotland Home and Foreign Mission Record.*

"WHAT SHOULD BE THE TENOR OF OUR PRAYERS?"

By the late Rev. A. N. Somerville, D.D.
(*Moderator of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland.*)

In regard to the world's evangelisation, enough cannot be said of the importance of *prayer*. The greatest, the most responsible, the busiest, and most successful servants that Christ ever had divide their functions into two departments. "We will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." What would be thought of dividing the twelve hours of our day by giving six hours to prayer for the Gospel, and six to the ministry of the Word? Had all Christ's servants acted thus, could any one estimate how mighty the results on the world would be to-day?

What should be the tenor of our prayers? If the promises of God may be regarded as moulds, our prayers should be like liquid metal poured into them, in dimension corresponding with the capacity of the mould, and taking on all the lines, grooves, and figuring of the interior.

If, then, we find such promises as these, "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea," a promise twice given in Scripture, and which has many corresponding with it, our prayers should be commensurate with the promise. We are not to pass by moulds, even of extremely limited

capacity, but by all means let us match the *great* promises of God with great prayers. Doubtless this is pleasing to God. In what manner God may see fit to fulfil his promises is quite another consideration. But would it not be well could we train ourselves to take up all the countries of the world in detail, and make mention of them systematically before God? There are persons who have attempted to do this every day of their lives, while others divide the world into portions, and take these up on successive days. I hope I may not offend any hearers if I venture to recommend the use of a prayer-book, which I have found of service, and which can be had from the shelves of Messrs. Keith Johnston & Co. I mean a pocket-atlas, which should be spread out like Hezekiah's letter before the Lord, and be gone over carefully from day to day, and from year to year, so that every kingdom, capital, island, and ocean should be individually remembered. If this were done on an extensive scale among Christians, blessed issues would ensue.

Let me say that our faith should lay account with a blessing coming to whole regions and kingdoms in response to the prayers of even one individual. Moses, when he prayed for himself to be permitted to cross the Jordan, was refused; yet, when he fell down before the Lord on Sinai's solitary top, forty days and forty nights, in intercession for two millions of guilty people, to avert judgment from them, God, as he tells us, hearkened unto him.

If we find that individuals are employed to change the face of continents by exploration or personal effort, why may not individuals equally prevail when they, by prayer, lay hold of the arm of the Almighty?

The answer to your prayers may come by God's sending you as evangelists or settlers to the very lands for

which you have prayed; or by enabling you to write a volume which may stir the Missionary activity of hundreds, or to prepare hymns that may be sung in every land and tongue. God may enable you, by your addresses as ministers, professors, and laymen, to rouse congregations and entire synods to their duty to the heathen, as well as to call forth the Christian enthusiasm of young men in our colleges and universities; and mothers in Israel, like Hannah, Lois, and Eunice, may, through prayer, be the means of sending forth a Carey, a Henry Martyn, a Duff, a William Burns, a Stanley Smith, or a Studd. I believe that the Day will declare that solitary individuals have, simply by their prayers, prevailed to introduce the Gospel into vast and populous dominions.

INTERCESSION.

By Rev. Handley C. G. Moule, M.A.

Let us thus pray for others indeed; let us live the life of intercessors joined by the Holy Spirit to the eternal and heavenly Intercessor. Let Epaphras be often in our thoughts, loving and mindful Epaphras, "who laboured always fervently in prayer" (Col. iv. 12) for his Colossian brethren, "that they might stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." Let us often visit blessed Paul in his Roman prison-chamber, and listen to him as he prays for his scattered converts and friends in Christ, making mention of them, setting before himself, and then before the Lord, their individuality, and its surroundings, and its needs, with intense and tender detail. There are many followers of Epaphras and of Paul in our day. I was told a few years ago, by one who well knew, that it was the practice of the late venerable Head of a College

at Oxford to pray every day by name for every undergraduate member of the College. It is beautifully significant, for it indicates the harmony of sanctified habits in a truly Christian life, that the same man also made it his practice never to open a letter without a moment's prayer that in the reading and the answering he might be kept and guided.

We Christians need continually to remember that Intercessory Prayer must always enter into the very life of the work which we seek to do for others, in and for the Lord. A devoted Sunday School teacher of whom I have heard, was the means under God of bringing scholar after scholar, with always growing frequency, to the feet of Jesus in living conversion, evidenced by a new life of love and consistency. After her death, her simple diary was found to contain among other entries the three following with some intervals between: "Resolved to pray for each scholar by name"; "Resolved to wrestle in prayer for each scholar by name"; "Resolved to wrestle for each by name, and to expect an answer."

How much we may do, by the Lord's mercy, by the mere fact that our friends know we are praying for them! A dear Missionary friend of my own has found not seldom, during hours of danger, exhaustion, and illness, in the heathen solitudes, when the mental effort of praying seemed too great to be sustained, that the shortest way to an answer of peace was the brief petition, "Lord, hear my praying friends in England."

From *Secret Prayer*, by Rev. H. C. G. Moule, M.A., published by Seeley & Co. Price 1s.

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